

Message Text

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70/63

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01

SP-03 OMB-01 DRC-01 /071 W
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R 241249Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN
TO SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC 1302
INFO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT LEBANON
AMEMBASSY JIDDA SAUDI ARABIA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IRAN
COMIDEASTFOR
CONGEN DHAHRAN SAUDI ARABIA 0235

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 0450

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT PARA 2)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS : ELAB, BA

SUBJECT : LABOR DISPUTE AT ALUMINUM BAHRAIN (ALBA)

REFS : MANAMA 420, 430 (BEING RPTED JIDDA, DHAHRAN AND TEHRAN)

1. ON SUFRACE LABOR SITUATION IN BAHRAIN QUIEROIY MOMENT.
ALBA NOW BACK TO REGULAR EIGHT HOUR SHIFTS, ALTHOUGH
APPROXIMATELY 300 OF 2,100 BAHRAINI WORKERS HAVE NOT
RETURNED. (ALBA WAS ABLE TO SHOW RECORD PRODUCTION DURING
PERIOD OF 12 HOURS SHIFTS.) WE UNDERSTAND ALBA NOT REPEAT
NOT PLANNING TO ENFORCE THREAT TO TERMINATE ALL WORKERS
WHO DID NOT RETURN BY JUNE 22 BUT DOES PLAN TO FIRE 81
OF THE STRIKERS WHOM ALBA CONSIDERS SECURITY RISKS.

2. AS TO ISSUES INVOLVED, KNOWLEDGEABLE WESTERN OBSERVER
WITH ANOTHER COMPANY IN BAHRAIN TELLS US MOST OF ALBA STRIKERS
DEMANDS WERE BREAD AND BUTTER ISSUES WHICH ALBA INDICATED
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IT WOULD CONSIDER SYMPATHETICALLY. STRIKERS, HOWEVER, ALSO

DEMANDED DE FACTO RECOGNITION OF AN ALBA LABOR UNION, AND ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM GOB, ALBA TOOK TOUGH LINE ON THIS ISSUE.

3. NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MEMBER EBRAHIM AL-KHALIFA IS REPORTED ON HIS OWN RECOGNIZANCE UNTIL HE CAN BE BROUGHT TO COURT. FOUR OTHERS REMAIN IN CUSTODY. GOVT WAS ABLE TO DELAY FURTHER DISCUSSION ON SUBJECT UNTIL CLOSED MEETING OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY JUNE 23. IF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MEMBERS INTEND TO PURSUE LABOR MATTERS TO ANY CONCLUSION, THEY MUST ACT BEFORE SUMMER RECESS NEXT WEEK. (UNLESS HIGHLY UNLIKELY EXTRAORDINARY SESSION CALLED.)

4. AS DISQUIETING SIDELIGHT, SHAIKH MOHAMMED BIN SULMAN, CONSERVATIVE BROTHER OF AMIR AND PRIMIN WHO HOLDS NO OFFICIAL POST IN GOVT., ADDRESSED STRIKING WORKERS SEVERAL TIMES DURING DISPUTE. ON ONE OCCASION, ACCORDING TO UNCONFIRMED REPORTS, HE PROMISED TO SUPPORT WORKERS IN THEIR DEMANDS. SHAIKH MOHAMMED IS KNOWN FOR CRITICIZING BROTHERS FOR NOT TAKING STRONG ENOUGH STAND AGAINST WORKERS. IF HIS DESIRE TO GAIN ATTENTION AND PARTICIPATE IN COUNTRY'S DECISION MAKING HAS LEAD HIM TO SUPPORT THIS CAUSE, IT COULD BE ANOTHER THORN IN SIDE OF RULING FAMILY.

5. WHILE WORK STOPPAGES HAVE SUBSIDED FOR MOMENT, WE UNDERSTAND GULF AVIATION WORKERS "REPRESENTATIVE" HAS SENT LETTER TO AUTHORITIES THREATENING STRIKE THERE IN TWO WEEKS IF ALL ALBA STRIKERS NOT REINSTATED. SINCE ALBA PRESENTLY NOT PLANNING TO TAKE HARD-CORE "TROUBLEMAKERS" BACK, ANOTHER CONFRONTATION MAY BE IN THE WORKS.
TWINAM

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LABOR STRIKES, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, INDUSTRIAL PLANTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 JUN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CollinP0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974MANAMA00450
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740165-1099
From: MANAMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740620/aaaaaqps.tel
Line Count: 91
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: : MANAMA 420, 430 (BEING RPTED JIDDA, , DHAHRAN AND TEHRAN)
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CollinP0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14-Aug-2002 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <19 FEB 2003 by CollinP0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: : LABOR DISPUTE AT ALUMINUM BAHRAIN (ALBA)
TAGS: ELAB, BA, ALUMINUM BAHRAIN-ALBA, GULF AVIATION, (AL-KHALIF, EBRAHIM), (SULMAN, SHAIKH MOHAMMED BIN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005